



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES ARIZONA STEM EDUCATION CENTER
Collaborative Effort Will Advance Science, Technology, Engineering, Math

PHOENIX –Governor Janet Napolitano today announced the new Arizona STEM Education Center, which will help Arizona expand its focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education to successfully prepare our children to lead in today’s competitive global economy.

“The new education center will help make certain that Arizona cultivates the skills needed to thrive in today’s global marketplace,” Governor Napolitano said. “Increasing science, technology, engineering and math education is critical to our students’ and state’s future.”

A public-private partnership with initial funding from Freeport-McMoRan Cooper & Gold and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Center aims to increase STEM teacher recruitment, training and retention; improve STEM skills in P-12 students, and boost the number of students entering higher education and graduating with degrees in STEM disciplines.

To accomplish this, the Center will work with stakeholders throughout the state to provide our students with an engaging and effective STEM education.

The Center is a collaboration among the Governor’s office, Science Foundation Arizona, the P-20 Council, the Arizona State Board of Education, tribal communities, Arizona universities, community colleges, and business and philanthropic initiatives. It will be housed within Science Foundation Arizona, which was established to build and strengthen Arizona’s scientific, engineering and medical competitiveness.

Darcy Renfro will serve as executive director of the Center. Currently the Governor’s policy adviser for higher education, innovation and the economy, Renfro previously served as the assistant deputy director of the Arizona Department of Commerce, in the area of Workforce Development and practiced law at the Arizona-based law firm of Fennemore Craig.

Building off of the Governor’s education priorities and her National Governors Association initiative, Innovation America, the Center’s efforts will support the Arizona State Board of Education’s new high school graduation requirements and increased academic standards, particularly in math and science. In anticipation of the upcoming increased demand for STEM teachers in Arizona, the Center will also support best practices in recruiting, training and retaining STEM teachers.

The Center will be funded independently, with both private and philanthropic funds.

For more information about the Office of the Governor, please visit www.azgovernor.gov.

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